

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

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FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2109

INFO AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

USDEL JEC PARIS

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

CINCPAC

CDRUSSAG NKP RTAFB

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 9161

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E. O. 11652 GDS

TAGS PINT VS

SUBJECT LOCAL ACCOMODATION IN QUANG NGAI

FOL SENT ACTION SAIGON FM DANANG AND RPTD FOR YOUR INFO QTE:

C O N F I D E N T I A L DANANG

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, VS

SUBJ: LOCAL ACCOMMODATION IN QUANG NGAI

THE FOLLOWING REPORT WAS PROVIDED BY QUANG NGAI POLOFF:

1. ACCORDING TO A FORMER CORDS EMPLOYEE WHO IS NOW A MEMBER
OF THE 3 RD BATTALION, 4 TH REGIMENT, 2 ND ARVN DIVISION STATIONED
IN THE MOUNTAINS WEST OF SA HUYNH, FRIENDLY AND ENEMY UNITS
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IN SOUTHERN QUANG NGAI HAVE MADE SOME SMALL PROGRESS TOWARDS LOCAL ACCOMMODATION AND THE DE FACTO RECOGNITION OF THE ZONES HELD BY THE RESPECTIVE SIDES. THERE HAVE BEEN FEW MILITARY ENGAGEMENTS BETWEEN FRIENDLY AND ENEMY TROOPS DURING THE PAST TWO MONTHS DESPITE THE FACT THAT THEIR OUTPOSTS ARE WITHIN SIGHT AND EARSHOT OF ONE ANOTHER. EARLIER THE PRG HAD SET UP LOUDSPEAKERS NEAR ARVN POSITIONS IN ORDER TO ISSUE PROPAGANDA APPEALS, BUT THE PROPAGANDISTS DESISTED AFTER ARVN TROOPS BEGAN TO CALL IN ARTILLERY ON THE LOUDSPEAKERS.

2. DURING THE DAY VC LABORERS WORKING ON ENEMY ROADS AND CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS ARE CLEARLY VISIBLE FROM THE ARVN POSITIONS. THE ADVERSARIES ALSO SHARE A COMMON WATER SOURCE, A STREAM THAT RUNS THROUGH A VALLEY ABOUT HALFWAY BETWEEN THEIR OPPOSITION POSITIONS, THE ENEMY TROOPS FETCHING THEIR WATER IN THE MORNINGS, THE FRIENDLIES IN THE EVENINGS. ON OCCASION THE TWO SIDES HAVE EXCHANGED GIFTS. WHEN THE VC LEFT SOME FRESHLY CAUGHT FISH ON THE STREAM BANK, THE ARVN SOLDIERS RESPONDED A FEW DAYS LATER BY LEAVING HALF A CARCASS OF A WILD BOAR WHICH ONE THE ARVN TROOPS HAD SHOT.

3. OCCASIONALLY THE TENUOUS LOCAL CEASEFIRE BREAKS DOWN. OUR INFORMANT, FOR EXAMPLE, WAS WOUNDED WHILE ATTEMPTING TO DEACTIVATE A BOOBY TRAP WHICH THE VC HAD PLACED ACROSS THE TRAIL LEADING FROM THE ARVN OUTPOST TO THE STREAM. FOR THE MOST PART, HOWEVER, THESE FLAREUPS ARE BRIEF AND SOON FORGOTTEN, AND THE ADVERSARIES RETURN TO THEIR NEW ROUTINE BY EYEING ONE ANOTHER CAUTIOUSLY BUT PEACEFULLY ACROSS A RECOGNIZED "NO MAN'S LAND." THE SITUATION IS ONE WHICH NO ONE TRULY EXPECTS TO CONTINUE FOR LONG, AND THE ARVN TROOPS MERELY AWAIT THE DAY WHEN THE VC WILL BEGIN A NEW SERIES OF ATTACKS ON THEIR POSITIONS AND THEIR TENUOUS CEASEFIRE EVAPORATES. BROWN UNQTE WHITEHOUSE

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